REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed May 7, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3

under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,532,241 to Ferguson

et al. ("*Ferguson*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,163,544 to Andersson et al.

("*Andersson*"); and rejected claims 4-8, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as

unpatentable over *Ferguson* in view of *Andersson*, and further in view of U.S. Patent

No. 5,926,463 to Ahearn et al. ("*Ahearn*").

In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's

rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met.

First, the prior art reference as modified must teach or suggest all the claim elements.

(See M.P.E.P. 2143.03 (8th ed. 2001)). Second, there must be some suggestion or

motivation, either in the reference or in the knowledge generally available to one of

ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or combine the reference teachings.

(See M.P.E.P. 2143 (8th ed. 2001)). Third a reasonable expectation of success must

exist. Moreover, each of these requirement must "be found in the prior art, and not be

based on applicant's disclosure." (M.P.E.P. 2143.03 (8th ed. 2001)).

Claim 1, as previously presented, provides for:

A method for customer centric network management comprising the steps, performed by a processor, of:
receiving identification data corresponding to a customer in a network;
accessing a generic information model database for one or more customer records corresponding to the customer identification data;
receiving selection information identifying a selected one of the one or more customer records, wherein the selected customer record corresponds to the customer; and
providing actual circuit path information corresponding to a customer service based on the selected customer record, wherein the actual circuit path information is used to generate a graphical representation of heterogeneous network components supporting a specific service for the customer.

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The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over *Ferguson* in view of *Andersson*. With respect to claim 1, the Examiner alleged that *Ferguson* discloses: receiving identification data corresponding to a customer in a network; accessing a database for one or more customer records corresponding to the customer identification data; receiving selection information identifying a selected one of the one or more customer records, wherein the selected customer record corresponds to the customer; and providing actual circuit path information corresponding to a customer service based on the selected customer record, wherein the actual circuit path information is used to generate a graphical representation of heterogeneous network components supporting a specific service for the customer.

The Examiner also admitted that *Ferguson* does not disclose that the database accessed is a generic information model database. The Examiner, however, is apparently equating "customer" with a network component.

Ferguson discloses a technique for identifying a data session flowing through entities of a multi-protocol network based on information contained within a service request provided by a user of the network (*Ferguson* abstract). The entities of the network comprise a System Network Architecture ("SNA") host mainframe, an end station and intermediate stations (*Ferguson* col. 8, lines 32-34). The technique uses search criteria to filter SNA sessions, the search criteria comprising various attributes of network components in the SNA (col. 8, line 57-col. 9 line 8; col. 12 lines 28-36; fig. 8).

While the claimed invention corresponds the identification data to a customer in a network, *Ferguson* ties the identification data to a network component. Unlike the claimed invention, *Ferguson* does not teach receiving data corresponding to a

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customer, accessing a database for one or more customer records corresponding to the customer identification data, receiving selection information identifying a selected set of customer records, and using the customer records in order to provide actual circuit path information used to create a graphical representation of heterogeneous network components supporting a specific service for a customer. The difference manifests itself in several ways. For example, the claimed invention tracks customers wherever they are located, such as, if they change machines. *Ferguson*, however, is limited to specific machines at specific locations.

The Examiner uses *Andersson* to allege a disclosure of storing information according to a generic information model. *Andersson*, however, makes no mention of using the customer and the customer records as presently claimed. For example, *Andersson* does not provide for receiving identification data corresponding to a customer in a network, wherein the customer corresponds to a person or a business entity, not network components.

Even if the combination was proper, claim 1 is patentable over *Ferguson* in view of *Andersson*. The Examiner's motivation, for example simplicity, is not supported by either reference since it is not always simpler to designate to a generic database rather than a specifically-designated one. Because claims 3 and 16 are independent claims with recitations similar to those of claim 1, they are patentable over *Ferguson* in view of *Andersson*.

With regard to the Examiner's rejections of claims 4-8 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over *Ferguson* in view of *Andersson* and further in view of *Ahearn*, Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as well.

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Claims 17 and 18 are independent claims with recitations similar to those of claims 3 and 1, respectively. Applicants respectfully submit that *Ahearn* is not sufficient to overcome the deficiencies of *Ferguson* and *Andersson*. *Ahearn* discloses a system for viewing a configuration of a computer network (*Ahearn* abstract). Devices in the network may be graphically displayed according to physical connectivity and status (*Ahearn* abstract). A network supervisor may use the system to create an IP view of a network that shows all of the devices and links between a particular workstation and a particular server, for example see (col. 6 lines 23-33; fig. 1). However, *Ahearn* does not teach or suggest receiving identification data corresponding to a customer in a network, wherein the customer corresponds to a person or a business entity, not network components. Therefore, claims 17 and 18 are allowable not only for the reasons stated above with regard to independent claims 3 and 1, respectively, but also for their own additional features that distinguish them from *Ferguson, Andersson*, and *Ahearn*.

Moreover, dependent claims 4-8 are allowable not only for the reasons stated above with regard to their allowable base claim 3, but also for their own additional features that distinguish them from *Ferguson, Andersson*, and *Ahearn*.

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In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to deposit account 07-2347.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: **August 6, 2004**   By:_____

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